



LEADERSHIP AND DIVERSITY

INFORMATIONAL WISDOM FROM THE HRA AND CCM COMMUNITIES



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Special Celebration

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Happy 4th of July!!

On behalf of all the members of the editing team, we hope you and your families enjoyed a safe and significant 4th of July holiday. Independence Day is an annual celebration of the freedom we enjoy, and a time for renewed patriotism in this home of the brave!



ANG Highlights

"Brig Gen Kerry L. Muehlenbeck, Arizona National Guard's first female general, 'an incredible mentor'"

By Maj. Gabe Johnson, Arizona National Guard

The Arizona National Guard congratulated its newest brigadier general at a promotion ceremony for the state's joint staff director June 7. Air Force Brig. Gen. Kerry Muehlenbeck now wears the rank commensurate with her duty to direct Arizona Army and Air Guard joint operations, special staff agencies, and joint policies and programs. Humbled by her promotion's significance, she said she will approach her job with a perspective that served her well during her 22-year military career.

"For me, this is another opportunity to do something new, broaden my scope and contribute," said Muehlenbeck, a judge advocate, or attorney, by trade. "It's another opportunity to either succeed or fail. I prefer success, but you can't be afraid to fail, especially if you learn from it. You've got to go out and try. That's what my parents always taught me." Muehlenbeck, a native of Saginaw, Michigan, began her career as an active duty judge advocate at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona. She transitioned to the Arizona Air National Guard in 1997 and has since served in the legal offices of the 161st Air Refueling Wing at Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport – the site of her recent promotion ceremony – and at the Arizona National Guard's Joint Force Headquarters also located in Phoenix. Most notably, she developed and instructed the Air National Guard's contemporary base issues course, a course well-known in Air Guard circles nationwide for preparing commanders and their support staff to face command and legal issues as a team. "She's taught thousands of



U.S. Air Force Col. Kerry L. Muehlenbeck was promoted to brigadier general June 7, 2014, at the 161st Air Refueling Wing, Phoenix. Her parents, Bill and Nancy Muehlenbeck, and her sister, Kelly Adams, pin on her new rank during her promotion ceremony. (Photo by Senior Airman Rashaunda Williams)



Airman's Creed

I am an American
Airman.

I am a warrior.
I have answered my
nation's call.

I am an American
Airman.

My mission is to fly,
fight, and win.

I am faithful to a
proud heritage,
A tradition of honor,
And a legacy of valor.

I am an American
Airman,

Guardian of freedom
and justice,
My nation's sword and
shield,

Its sentry and avenger.
I defend my country
with my life.

I am an American
Airman:

Wingman, Leader,
Warrior.

I will never leave an
airman behind,
I will never falter,
And I will not fail.



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commanders, chiefs and first sergeants about how to handle very complex issues," said Master Sgt. Lori Jung, who assisted Muehlenbeck with the CBI course for nearly a decade. "She has a sharp sense of humor and she's the best teacher I've seen. She's by the book and knows how to find the answer to anything. She's been the most incredible mentor I've had in my entire life and I'm ecstatic that she is now a general officer. Though she never thought so, I always knew someday she would be a general. We're very lucky to have her," said Jung, who continues to serve as the law office superintendent at the 161st.

In her civilian career, Muehlenbeck is a professor at Mesa Community College and an adjunct faculty member at Arizona State University. As a teacher she works with a diverse cross section of students that, she said, keep her people and management skills uniquely honed for service as a military leader. For the new general, success as a civilian and as a Citizen-Airman is achieved through finding equilibrium among her various roles – never placing her entire identity into one basket. "The military is a big part of me – but it's not all of me. I've tried to balance all aspects of my life over the years," Muehlenbeck said. "So, as much as I may be a brigadier general, I am as much a daughter that values what my parents tell me, and I am as much a sister that still teases her sibling. The key is to find that balance and learn not to take yourself so seriously."

Muehlenbeck is the first woman in the Arizona National Guard to serve as a general officer. While it is yet another label she gladly accepts, she maintains a practical point of view on being the first. "If I succeed or fail, it's not because I am a woman, it's because I did or didn't do a good job," she said. "I am not a pioneer. There were certainly pioneers within the generations of women who came before me, and those are the shoulders I've been standing on throughout my career. They fought battles that I didn't have to fight." The general's fresh perspective and legal background are expected to play a key role within the Arizona National Guard's senior leadership cadre as they shape a post-war future for Guard members, their families, and all Arizonans. Promotion and the responsibilities that come with it, Muehlenbeck said, cause her to reflect on many factors. "Gratitude is most important because there are many people who have the talent and qualifications to be where I am. I am very thankful for the opportunity."

Re: <http://www.nationalguard.mil/News/ArticleView/tabid/5563/Article/9274/arizona-national-guards-first-female-general-an-incredible-mentor.aspx>

Feature Article

"Focusing on Racists Perpetuates Racism"

By Susana Rinderle, May 21, 2014



Donald Sterling is in the news — a name I didn't know until a few weeks ago, although I'm a Los Angeles native and have seen the Clippers play live. As a diversity and inclusiveness practitioner I've been asked what I think about him and his "racist" comments, just like I'm often asked to express my opinion or outrage about the latest "racist" to dominate the media like Paula

Air Force Core Values

Integrity first

*Service before
self*

*Excellence in
all we do*

Important Dates to Remember

July

July 1; Diana,
Princess of Wales
Birthday

July 4:
Independence Day ~
Fourth of July (U.S.
Declaration of
Independence)

July 5:
Independence Day
(Venezuela)

July 14: Bastille Day
(France) (French
Revolution 1789)

July 28: National
Parent's Day
(Observed the
fourth Sunday in
July)

July 29: NASA's
Anniversary

Deen, the Duck Dynasty guy or the teacher who criticized an African-American student for dressing up as Santa Claus last December here in New Mexico. People sometimes ask me when my blog about such incidents is going to come out. But I don't typically write about these topics for two reasons. One, I value contributing something new to a conversation, so if I don't have anything to add to what's already being said, I usually don't chime in. Two, and more importantly, I think it's a waste of precious time. People who make bigoted, prejudicial, ignorant or mean comments aren't new, nor are they newsworthy. Focusing so much time, attention, energy and dialogue on them is a harmful waste of time because it diverts critical focus and precious resources from more important work in two ways:

- **It demonizes the individual while ignoring the big picture — the context and enduring structures that create and perpetuate such behaviors.** When these incidents occur, we lose another opportunity to have meaningful dialogue and ask real questions. Questions like how common are these beliefs today? Where did they come from? Why do they persist? How does this set of beliefs affect people's lives today? How and why was Sterling's behavior tolerated or ignored by those around him? What were his motivations or unmet needs? How could these behaviors be responded to in a way that encourages change and growth? How can such behavior be prevented in the future?
- **It tricks us (particularly white people) into thinking if we're not saying bigoted, prejudicial, ignorant or mean comments; we're not a part of the problem.** We hear the recordings of Sterling, express our righteous outrage, and go back to our lives feeling good about being good people. More interesting questions would be: Who is responsible for this situation? How am I contributing to this problem? What can I do differently to contribute to a solution?

The main problem isn't individual racists, it's racism and all the other -isms. The problem isn't individual acts of bigotry, ignorance, meanness, awkwardness or frustration — it's the enduring structures and systems we've created in our minds and our institutions that constantly (and often unconsciously) assign inferior worth, access, resources and benefits to large groups of people based on superficial traits over which they have no control. **The problem is also groups of organized racists, specifically the more than 900 active groups operating today in the United States.** This number has ballooned since President Obama first took office. Such groups should be viewed as domestic terrorists, and hate crimes understood and prosecuted as such.

The important work we should be dedicated to in the workplace, instead of just attending to the latest unpleasant "racist" incident in society or our organization, is five-fold: (1) ongoing awareness and self-reflection, (2) meaningful dialogue about race, difference and power, (3) clear goals, (4) shared responsibility and accountability, and (5) a fierce commitment to inclusiveness — ensuring all types of human diversity are seen, fully heard, included, celebrated and engaged. Only then will we access the brilliance and excellence that are the rewards of a diverse and inclusive environment.

Mentoring

Model – must lead by example

Empathize – a measure of interpersonal involvement and caring

Nurture – caring attitude with an emphasis on development and understanding

Teach – step-by-step learning and correcting mistakes

Organize – sequential plan of lessons with a defined target of learning

Respond – developing a communicative process between the two

Inspire – motivating a person to be better than before

Network – introduce to others that can also provide support, info and resources

Goal-set – set realistic and attainable goals

We could also take a cue from Magic Johnson and not pay “racists” more attention than necessary. Last week he tweeted: “I’d rather be talking about these great NBA playoffs than Donald Sterling’s interview.” Enough said.

Re: <http://blog.diversity-executive.com/2014/05/21/focusing-on-racists-perpetuates-racism/>

Ethics & Character

“The Worth of Trustworthiness”

By Mark S. Putnam



What happened to the days when a business transaction was sealed by a handshake and one's word? What did we do before employment contracts, confidentiality agreements, and loyalty pledges? True, these legal instruments serve to protect everyone's interests but no amount of legal agreements can guarantee personal trustworthiness.

In the business world the word "trust" is tossed around in corporate mission statements and marketing campaigns like any other buzzwords in order to convince customers that their company is more honest than the next. But think about what trustworthiness means and what responsibilities it requires, it then takes on a deeper meaning. You can talk about trust, write about trust, sign agreements to trust, but they aren't worth the paper they're printed on unless all the parties involved can be counted upon to be trustworthy people. For starters, besides staying on the right side of the law, are you a fundamentally trustworthy person? Most people can attest to their own trustworthiness yet they don't trust others. There's a sense of "I'm OK but you're not OK." Consider for a moment that you're not OK. Do you ever make promises you can't keep? Do you take shortcuts? Do you manipulate or withhold information to get what you want? Do you do rationalize unethical behavior to suit your needs or wants? Believe it or not, the area of trustworthiness falls closer to home than most people think.

The fact is you may have opportunity to show your level of trustworthiness to everyone around you hundreds of times a day. Your character is constantly on display to the world without your being consciously aware of it. Making a promise to a coworker or customer is a test of your trustworthiness. Playing by the rules when it's more profitable not to, is another test of trustworthiness. Consider the following ingredients of trustworthiness:

Honesty: Without honesty there is no trust. It's impossible. It can't exist. Deception is the antithesis of trustworthiness. The problem that most people face is that they allow themselves to practice "little deceptions" too often and don't realize how they slowly erode one's character and trustworthiness. For a trustworthy person, the little things do matter. He or she doesn't exaggerate or twist the truth. When everyone else is aiming to please, the trustworthy person tells it like it is.



Gen Frank J. Grass
Chief of the National
Guard Bureau

"One of our National Guard's greatest strengths as an operational force is that we are present in communities across the country. In the end, when you bring in the National Guard, you bring in the richness and diversity of hometown America."



Command Chief Master
Sgt. Mitchell Brush
Senior Enlisted Leader

On development of the force: "If you don't have a bench of people to replace you, then whose fault is that?"

Integrity: A trustworthy person has integrity like a rock that is solid, firm, and unwavering. This is called having principles. Principles are the underlying rules or assumptions upon which one bases his or her moral code. They are not just feel-good slogans but are bedrock values. When those values are challenged, a trustworthy person has moral courage to stand upon principle. Integrity is about actions rather than just words. To a trustworthy person, a code of conduct actually has meaning and workplace ethics is connected to a deeply held set of personal values that permeate all aspects of life.

Keeping promises: When you think of someone who is trustworthy, you immediately think about the promises that person has made and kept. That's how most people gauge trustworthiness. Of course, keeping promises is much more than keeping appointments and making your business goals. It means that your word is as good as gold. It shows your basic level of loyalty and fidelity to others. It communicates something significant and meaningful about how you value people and relationships.

Usually the biggest barrier to becoming a trustworthy person is ourselves. For whatever reason, we sabotage our best efforts because of greed, selfishness, lack of self-control, or insecurity. The biggest tragedy is that once we lose it, it is almost impossible to get it back. No amount of future promises can mend the broken one. The most solemn oath and pile of legally binding assurances do little to repair it. No bandage and quick fix is available. The only way to restore trust is to start over again by keeping one's promises and rebuilding relationships one at a time.

Becoming a trustworthy person is within the reach of anyone. It is a powerful and essential character trait that can take you far in every kind of relationship you make. Trustworthiness starts with you, no matter who you are. It doesn't matter what clothes you wear, your level of education, family, connections, or your wealth or popularity. It starts with the words you say, the everyday actions you do, and the promises you keep. You can't buy it. You can't pretend to have it. You have to prove it.

Re: <http://www.character-ethics.org/articles/WorthofTrustworth.htm>

Leadership

"Be a Leader- Not a Gas!"

By: Larysa Slobodian, Principal Consultant & Executive Coach, L4 Leadership LLC

We've all had basic chemistry and physics right? Do you know the basic difference between a gas compared to a solid or a liquid? Liquids and solids have a set volume meaning they take up the same amount of space regardless of the container size. A liquid may change its shape, (it molds to the shape of the container) but the volume is the same. You can break up a solid to get it to fit into a container, but the volume stays the same. A gas will fill the volume of the container. It does this nifty trick by changing other properties like density, but it



Lieutenant General
Lt. Gen. Stanley E.
Clarke III, Director Air
National Guard

"As leaders, it is in our best interest to mentor all members so they are able to perform and engage at the very highest levels of the profession of arms."



Command Chief
James Hotaling,
ANG Command
Chief

"Fate has placed us in this position. Our Airmen expect the best from us every day, and we will not fail them."

Key Focus Areas:

- Renew Our Commitment to the Profession of Arms.
- Health of the Force.
- Recognize/Embrace Our Accomplishments.

will expand or even contract to fit the size of the container moving in the direction of the least of resistance.

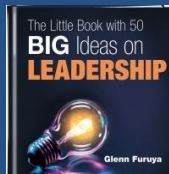
When it comes to time and tasks, people behave like gases. That is, **we fill the space of the time container.** Take a look at your meetings today. How many of them ran either right up to the end of the meeting time? Maybe some ran over? People behave like gases and fill the size of the container. And it's not just in how long we do things. It's how we manage ourselves during our time container. Have you ever been in a meeting where people leave mumbling how nobody discussed the "main issue" or the difficult point? When do decisions finally get made? When does the difficult conversation happen? Often it's at the end of the meeting or it is delayed, postponed or avoided. When does a difficult personal relationship get reconciled? Often it happens at death's door or never at all. We do this with good stuff too. When do we tell our best employee or colleague how much we appreciate them? Too often it's when they are leaving us, the department or the organization. When do we tell those people that we love how important they are to us, or ask the questions that we need to ask? Too often it's at the end of a life. And when do we finally make room for the most important things that we want to do with our days and our lives? Somebody when I retire, I will..... You get the idea.

There are two big points here that I want you to consider. 1. We are letting the container determine how and when we get things done. 2. We are filling the container space often with the stuff that offers us the least amount of resistance first. But there's good news here. We are not gases and we can behave as leaders in terms of what we do and when and how we do it. We can demonstrate leadership in how we manage our container and our time in it.

So RULE # 1- Manage the size of the container: Stop scheduling one hour meetings. One hour is arbitrary, but since it coincides with the clock and everybody uses an hour, scheduling hour long meetings FITS. When you are scheduling an arbitrary time because it "fits" then you are being a gas. A simple tactic that you can do right away is schedule 45 minute meetings or even 20 minute meetings (instead of 30). Or at the start of each meeting, announce that you must stop at 45 minutes. Then use those 15 minutes to either follow through on commitments, delegate, research or recharge. TRY IT! If 45 seems too drastic for you, then try 50 minute meetings. If you're not doing it this way, then what you will have at the end of each day, is a long to do list of accumulations from each meeting and you will be working at the end of the day when you are most exhausted to do some of your most important work, or you will be cramming in your tasks at other meetings while appearing distracted and overwhelmed. OR you will be running late to each meeting. Any of these behaviors sound familiar? Be a leader, not a gas and manage the container size. You'll be more efficient and have more energy throughout the day.

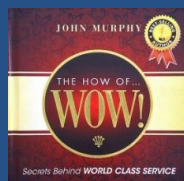
RULE #2: Shape the Container: Solid Leaders address Resistance: A gas will fill the size and shape of the container and go first where the resistance is least. When people behave like a gas, we avoid the work that requires working through some big resistance. The most common resistance that I see includes: avoiding

Recommended Reading



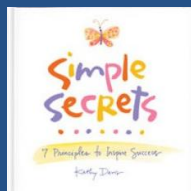
The Little Book with 50 Big Ideas on Leadership by: Glenn Furuya

<http://www.walkthetalk.com/gift-books-movies/becoming-an-effective-leader/the-little-book-with-50-big-ideas-on-leadership.html>



The How of Wow by John Murphy

<http://www.walkthetalk.com/leadership-and-personal-development/specialty-brands/go-for-the-gold/go-for-the-gold-library/the-how-of-wow.html>



Simple Secrets 7 Principles to Inspire Success

by Kathy Davis
<http://www.walkthetalk.com/simple-secrets.html>

conflict, not wanting to feel awkward, not wanting to hurt somebody's feelings, discomfort with learning a new way, fear of rejection, or belief of a self limiting story about our own potential. But it's often the greatest impact is just on the other side of resistance.

I met a leader years ago that would often go after the hardest topics that others have been avoiding. When I asked him why he said, "Because that's where the greatest opportunity lies." **Brilliant!** Doing the easy things with the least resistance will just ensure that you fit in the container and you make the least impact. You will expend more energy over a longer period of time by avoiding resistance. Put smart time and energy into addressing resistance and you free up time, build energy and challenge yourself limiting beliefs. Turn up the pressure and get molecules moving. That doesn't mean go after resistance aimlessly. Do important work first. Address THE critical agenda item at the start. Have game changing conversations immediately. Ask what needs to be asked at the beginning. Tell people how much you appreciate them today and fire the self limiting story tellers that are occupying the space in your mind's container.

Hesitation turns into delay. Delay turns into opportunity gone away.

The other cost that comes with behaving like a gas, is that by waiting to do the hard things, those that you want to resist, you use up all your energy on the little things. By the time you get to the big things that you've been resisting, you are out of energy and they seem EVEN HARDER. Remember, **hesitation turns into delay- delay turns into opportunity gone away!**

Shape and lead your time instead of mindlessly filling the space of the provided container. **Be a LEADER- not a gas!**

Re: <http://www.l4leadership.com/l4/executive/be-a-leader-not-a-gas/>

Better Workplace

"Big Rock First"

by Michael Josephson

There's a well-traveled story about a teacher who showed his class a one-gallon jar and a dozen large rocks.

After a little rearranging, he got all the rocks into the jar, filling it to the top. He then dumped a bag of gravel into the jar until the spaces between the rocks were filled. Next he poured sand into the jar, shaking it so the sand filled the spaces between the rocks and the gravel. Finally, he emptied a pitcher of water into it.

"What does this demonstration prove?" he asked. One student said, "No matter how full your life seems, you can always take on a little more." Another said, "Sequence and planning is important to maximizing productivity." A third said, "It's about setting priorities. If you don't deal with the big rocks first, all you'll end up with is a jar of wet sand and gravel."

Reflection of the Month

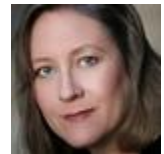
“Passion is contagious and when you have the courage to share your passion for life with those around you it can inspire others to find the path to their dreams.”
~Michele DeVille

There’s validity to each response, but the idea of identifying and dealing with the big rocks first is a particularly valuable insight. We will live fuller and more fulfilling lives if we set our priorities – not only at work but in our life as a whole.

Our relationships, work, spiritual life, hobbies, and charitable causes all claim our attention. We have to decide what’s really important. Too often we surrender control of our days, even the direction of our lives, by letting circumstances or other people determine how we spend our time. Thus, we deal with what comes at us in the order that it comes or with squeaking wheels and demanding people. Unless we distinguish between the rocks, gravel, sand, and water in our lives, we’re likely to neglect or forget the things that truly matter.

Re: <http://whatwillmatter.com>

Diversity



“How ‘Diversity Fatigue’ Undermines Business Growth” By Karen E. Klein

Recent research shows that companies with diverse leadership perform better, on both equity returns and earnings margins, than their non-diverse counterparts. Although the findings come from research on publicly traded companies, the same principle applies to private companies, says Shirley Engelmeier, chief executive of 11-employee consulting firm Inclusion INC in Minneapolis and author of the new book, *Inclusion: The New Competitive Business Advantage*. She believes that intentionally building a diverse team is crucial for small ventures seeking to expand and sustain growth. I spoke to Engelmeier recently about how diversity initiatives have changed and what small employers can do to retool their hiring strategy. Edited excerpts of our conversation follow.

A new McKinsey report shows that U.S. companies with the highest executive-board diversity had returns on equity 95 percent higher and earnings margins 58 percent higher, on average, than those with the least executive diversity. How does this kind of bottom-line analysis affect the push to increase workplace diversity?

Women and people of color are not yet at parity when it comes to leadership positions in business, yet at the time we should care more than ever about race and gender, diversity fatigue has set in. We’ve been at this for two decades. I find that, more and more, if this isn’t mission-critical for business and can’t be linked to bottom-line issues such as productivity, engagement, and innovation, the C-suite doesn’t care about it.

When we did diversity training and recruiting in the 1990s, it was more about affirmative action and being “the right thing to do.” Those efforts really didn’t hit

The Seven C's of character:

Conscience

Compassion

Consideration

Confidence

Control

Courage

Competency

The Six Pillars of Character

Trustworthiness

Respect

Responsibility

Fairness

Caring

Citizenship

the mark, because it was too theoretical and wasn't strategic. Now we talk about inclusion and how that links to innovation. You're not hiring a woman or a person of color and patting them on the head saying, "we're doing this for you." You're doing it because you want the best talent.

Small businesses are often started by groups of friends or relatives. That means their leaders tend to look and think alike. Why should entrepreneurs move outside their affinity groups to diversify their organizations? I think the key for small business is to look at what their growth strategy is, what they are trying to accomplish, and what kinds of viewpoints they need to achieve that. By 2015, Hispanics will account for 9.9 percent of all U.S. buying power. If you're selling a product to that rapidly growing group, how do you expect to do that unless you have that presence and thought process on your team? The reason for bringing other kinds of people into your company is to get out of your comfort zone and find out what other people are thinking. And by the way, the concept of diversity should include age, personality, and perspective. You might have a team of all white men that is diverse in terms of personality.

How have you pursued this goal in your own business?: Because this is what we do, we consciously look at the filter we use for hiring to make sure we get diversity, but I think we're atypical for a small business. What I did learn the hard way was that I initially hired employees who all came from my industry, but because they had worked for large companies, they didn't have the rigor of entrepreneurship. Small business is really tough, things change quickly, and innovation happens constantly. You have to find employees who are on track with the entrepreneurial perspective, even if they might not know your industry specifically. Look at core competency and hire people who can learn quickly.

You emphasize inclusion and innovation in your new book. How do you achieve those goals in your company?: What drives innovation is sharing with your employees what you want your company to do. Ask for their input, truly listen to what they're saying, and value different points of view. Even if an idea doesn't fit, don't roll your eyes: Express appreciation and give honest feedback on why it doesn't make sense for now but could be captured in the next project. In a small business, if you don't have an ego-driven owner or a hierarchical structure, innovative ideas will be a natural flow of how work gets done.

Your book talks about incorporating Gen Y employees, individuals now in their teens up to age 30, into organizations dominated by Baby Boom and Gen X leaders. What are the issues there?: Gen Y represents nearly a quarter of the American workforce today and will be more than half by 2020. They are more technically competent and more comfortable with different ethnic and racial groups. They often are overly ambitious, which can be a problem for their older employers, who worry about whether they are paying their dues.

My youngest employee is 26, and she's technically brilliant. I want her replacing me on the technology parts of my business as soon as possible. I think Baby Boomers and Gen Xers should create ways to keep that kind of brilliance within

Contact Us

If you have an inspiring story or article related to the subject matters discussed in this publication and will like to contribute, or if you have any value added comment or idea, please contact us.

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their organizations by valuing them and being willing to hear their ideas.

Re: <http://www.businessweek.com/printer/articles/25206-how-diversity-fatigue-undermines-business-growth>

Mentoring & Force Development

“Saying the Right Thing” by Michael Josephson

When someone you care about is suffering greatly, what’s the right thing to say to make him or her feel better? There are all sorts of traumas that can send us to the darkest dungeons of despair – the death of a loved one, being raped, getting a divorce, losing a limb, seeing a child sent to jail or on drugs. Whatever the cause, when we become so despondent or depressed that we start wondering whether life is worth living, we need a real friend.

I’m no expert in conveying condolences, but one thing I’ve learned is that trying to command, cajole, or convince a broken person to repress, reject, or disguise his or her feelings is more harmful than helpful. Telling someone whose loved one died not to feel bad because “She lived a long life”, or, “At least he’s not suffering anymore” might offer some consolation, but it doesn’t go to the core of the hurt or acknowledge the loss of the person left to deal with the tragedy’s aftermath. Even less helpful are remarks like “It’s not as bad as it seems,” “It could have been worse,” or “You’ll get over it.” However well-intentioned, attempts to give a grieving person a long-term perspective probably won’t work while the pain’s still intense and fresh. Worst of all, telling a person to “Cheer up” or “Look at the bright side” as if the individual simply has to flip a switch implies that the person ought to be handling his or her sorrow better.

Finally, what makes us think we’re helping a grief-stricken friend by using his or her tragedy as an excuse to talk about ourselves? (“I know how you feel. I lost my dad last year” or “You’ll get over it. I did.”) In the early stages, grief isn’t just an attitude, it’s an affliction. It can’t be turned off or toned down. It often has to run its course. Yes, there may be times when we can redirect a friend to other matters and more positive thoughts, but generally he or she has to experience and work through all the natural emotions that flow from the calamity including self-pity, resentment, anger, and fear. The bottom line is, this is tricky territory. Most of us just aren’t as good as those who write Hallmark cards. On the other hand, it’s just as bad if we become so self-conscious about saying the wrong thing that we fail to be there at all. All we can do is speak through our hearts, hoping our awkward words will be forgiven and our good intentions appreciated.

The best antidotes to hopeless grief are sincere expressions of love and support that prove life *is* worth living. What do you think? Is there a right thing to say? What have you said or written to someone that meant a lot to that person? If you’ve ever experienced deep grief, what did someone do that uplifted you?

Re: <http://whatwillmatter.com/2013/05/commentary-828-5-saying-the-right-thing/>

Be someone who matters to someone who matters...Mentoring Works!

Added Value & Wisdom

"Helping Hands"

Author unknown

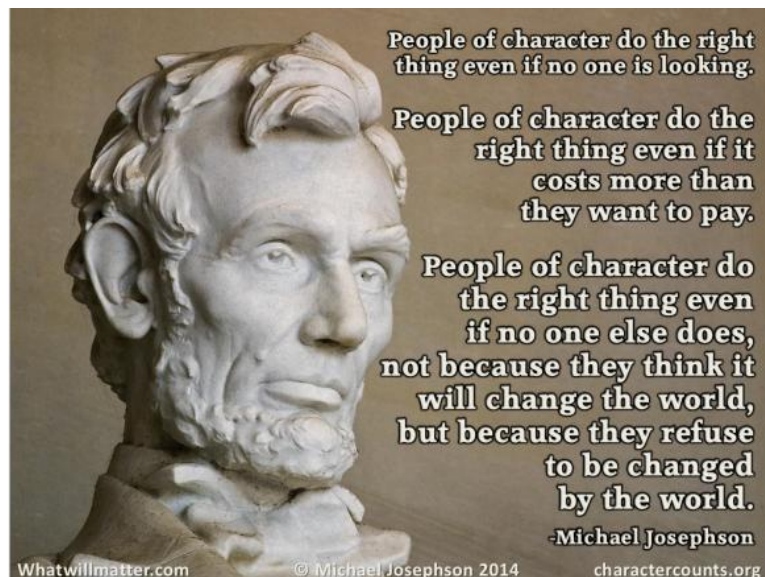
A mother, wishing to encourage her son's progress at the piano, bought tickets to a performance by the great Polish pianist Ignace Paderewski. When the evening arrived, they found their seats near the front of the concert hall and eyed the majestic Steinway waiting on the stage. Soon the mother found a friend to talk to, and the boy slipped away.

At eight o'clock, the lights in the auditorium began to dim, the spotlights came on, and only then did they notice the boy - up on the piano bench, innocently picking out "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star." His mother gasped in shock and embarrassment but, before she could retrieve her son, the master himself appeared on the stage and quickly moved to the keyboard.

He whispered gently to the boy, "Don't quit. Keep playing." Leaning over, Paderewski reached down with his left hand and began filling in the bass part. Soon his right arm reached around the other side and improvised a delightful obligato. Together, the old master and the young novice held the crowd mesmerized with their blended and beautiful music.

In all our lives, we receive helping hands - some we notice, some we don't. Equally we ourselves have countless opportunities to provide helping hands - sometimes we would like our assistance to be noticed, sometimes we don't. Little of what we all achieve is without learning from others and without support from others and what we receive we should hand out.

Re: <http://www.rogerdarlington.me.uk/stories.html#Story44>



EDITORIAL NOTE

The material researched and used for this publication is the intellectual property of the authors cited. In some instances part of an article has been required to be edited, (summarized and/or paraphrased) for length, and/or from different sources compiled by the editor to capture the essence and the message to bring the best information to the readers. We strive to acknowledge each and every contributing author and source to give the proper credit for their work.

On behalf of the editing team, we will like to extend our sincere gratitude to the many contributing authors for their excellent and often inspiring work that has motivated some of the important information hereby shared with all the readers. We recognize all our contributing authors and value their excellent and significant work.

We endeavor to continue offering the best first-class value added informational material with the highest quality, meaning and importance to all our readers for their personal and professional growth.

We appreciate the great support received from the readers.

The Editing Team

Insight, Food for Thought

“Pleasure is very seldom found where it is sought. Our brightest blazes are commonly kindled by unexpected sparks.” ~Samuel Johnson

“Our words reveal our thoughts; manners mirror our self-esteem; our actions reflect our character; our habits predict the future.” ~William Arthur Ward

“Mistakes are the portals of discovery.” ~James Joyce

“Passion is energy. Feel the power that comes from focusing on what excites you.” ~Oprah Winfrey

“Every problem has in it the seeds of it’s own solution. If you don’t have any problems, you don’t get any seeds.” ~Norman Vincent Peale

“The brick walls are not there to keep us out; the brick walls are there to give us a chance to show how badly we want something.” ~Randy Pausch

“The way you get meaning into your life is to devote yourself to loving others, devote yourself to your community around you, and devote yourself to creating something that gives you purpose and meaning.” ~Mitch Albom

“Anyone can give up, it’s the easiest thing in the world to do. BUT to hold it together, that’s true strength.” Found in the book: Simple Secrets, by: Kathy Davis

“Enthusiasm is the yeast that makes your hopes shine to the stars. Enthusiasm is the sparkle in your eyes, the swing in your gait. The grip in your hand, the irresistible surge of will and energy to execute your ideas.” ~Henry Ford

“Keep your face to the sunshine and you will not see the shadows.” ~Helen Keller

“It's better to look ahead and prepare than to look back and regret.” -- Jacki Joyner-Kersey, Athlete